TO THE

HIMERS of the preſent Year, 1753.

RHIMING GENTRY,

ORE dedicating, than dedicated to, Ye may with Reaſon be ſurpris'd at this unuſual Addreſs; which on Peruſal, ye'll perhaps diſcover be rather a Remonſtrance againſt a vulgar Error, Ye, d your jingling Predeceſſors have long labour'd under; pos'd on the Public; and diſhonoured the venerable me of *Poet*. To that Appellation ye arrogantly think urſelves intitled from the Moment ye can make two es clink to each other by the End, tho' without the ſt national Smack of *Britiſh Senſe*; the ſlighteſt Trait the *Bienſeance* of the *French*; or any faint Sparkling e to the *Vivezzè d'ingegno* of the *Italians*. Ye apr abſolute Strangers to the *Urbanitas Romana* of the gant *Latin* Writers --- Your inſipid Thoughts never felt happy Seaſoning of a Grain of *Attic Salt*. Nay no-

thing *Grecian* can be found in your criminal Productions, but their ſtigmatiz'd το ταπεινον, the undiſputed Hereditary Motto of the mere *Rhiming* Family.

As well might a mean Colour-Grinder rank Himſelf with an APELLES, TITIAN, or a RUBENS; a Sweeper of the Stage with a *Roſcius*, *Baron*, or a *Booth*. — Thus ever glaringly abſurd is Impudence in the low Extreme of Things.

In order to correct you, if corrigible, by ſhewing you your Defects; and to raiſe in the Opinion of all ingenuous Readers, the, thro' You, degraded Idea of *Poe*[illegible] have crayon'd the following Piece.

If hereby convinced of your Miſtake, ye Quit the Avenues of *Parnaſſus* ye have ſo long infeſted; and become uſeful, ſince *Nature* as well as *Art* deny you to be ornamental Members of Society: I ſhall commence your Friend. But if ye obſtinately perſevere to expoſe yourſelves and manifeſt Heaven's Indignation on theſe Nations

*Odi profanum vulgus, et arceo.* Hor.

profane Rhiming Rabble, Diſgrace of the Muſes, I am at enmity with you.

One Happineſs muſt attend this Dedication, which if it make no Friend, it can make no Foe. — For who among

among the Unworthies will be ſo uncomplaiſant as to think Himſelf addreſſed to? and Thoſe who really are, or even may ſeem true Candidates for the Laurel fall not within the Sweep of our Compliment.

Should any Wag, on obſerving the following Poem to be in *Rhime*, reply, " Why, ſmart Sir, you yourſelf are " an Addition to the national Calamity you complain " of" ---- Suppoſe I grant it ---- By this public Attack againſt my Rhiming unpoetical Fraternity may I not hope a Pardon from the high Court of *Parnaſſus?* --- In *civil* Juſtice a Culprit who diſcovers his iniquitous Brethren becomes an Object of Mercy ----- The *Poetical* is not leſs equitable.

Therefore Gentlemen of *two* Ends, and ſometimes of *three*, with a juſt Contempt for your frequent Want of Deſign, no Thought, Inelegance, Miſintelligence of Words, and many other Abſurdities familiar to you; I diſclaim all farther Communication: and to more effectually eſcape from your incumbent Darkneſs, cimmerian Labyrinths, and muddy Lakes, to the ſunny Banks of Genius, Groves ever green, and *Hippocrene*'s fair Stream

*Je me ſauve a la Nage, et j'abords ou je puis,*

as whilom ſang BOILEAU of Poetaſter-hating Memory.

THE

# THE

# POET.

THE Time has been BRITANNIA cou'd call forth
True Sons of *Genius*, of *Poetic* Worth:
But now (O Shame!) vile Inſects of a Day
uzz Us with *Rhime*, unnotic'd die away;
ymptoms of *Wit* and *Monarchy*'s Decay *.

* That the Author may not be accus'd of Singularity, for this his Opi-on, read the *Prophetic* Authorities of ROSCOMMON, POPE, and BO-INGBROKE.

*True* Poets *are the Guardians of a State,*
*And when They fail, portend approaching Fate.* ROSCOMMON.

*Ye* Gods, *what Juſtice rules the Ball!*
*Freedom and Arts together fall!* POPE.

*ery Idea of* Wit, *and All that can be called* Taſte, *has been long loſt*
Arts and Sciences are ſcarce alive; *Thus it is when Govern-*
*The* Decay *appears in every Inſtance.* BOLINGBROKE.

Who

Who is the Poet? He whoſe letter'd Mind
Directs each Paſſion, to no Party's blind;
Whom at his Birth the MUSES hail'd their own,
Whoſe Fame by *Genius*, not from *Rhiming*'s grown:
Whom his kind Star in ſtudious Eaſe ſecures,
From all a Wretch thro' Penury endures.

In vain, alas, Imagination glows,
And pregnant Thought the readieſt Wit o'erflows;
If meagre Want the riſing Sally quell,
Or haughty Dunns the timid Muſe expel.
Time ſlowly crawls; the Seaſons come: They go.--
To Him, one dread, unvarying Scene of Woe.

Thoſe Pow'rs in *Wealth* that Pleaſures deify,
Reverſt by *Want* black Sorrow multiply.---
When *Dædal* Nature tints the varied Spring,
Thro' vocal Groves aërial Lovers ſing;
Of Poverty the Heart-corroding Care
Deadens the Charms of the reviving Year

AURORA waking ſtreaks the breezy Morn,
SOL's am'rous Beams the rural Scene adorn;
The poor Bard's Fancy like a miſty Spray,
Mars the gay Landskip, clouds each vivid Ray.
Sweet purling Rills, loud Billows on the Shore,
Hills, Vales, and Woods ------ and THAMES delight no more!
By Faction lifted Oppoſites t' abuſe,
He writes for Pay, not from th' inſpiring Muſe.
Want threw a Cloud o'er DRYDEN's deathleſs Fame,
His Country's Honour, and his Country's Shame.
How mean the Lines in Indigence he wrought,
Poor as his Purſe, and gloomy as his Thought!
Such as mere *Rhimers*, ſuch as I indite,
When uninſpir'd we ſcrawl in Art's Deſpite;
Yet pertly flat, ſans Genius, Spirit, Senſe,
Aſſume the *Poet*'s Name: vain Impotence!

*Cadence* and *Rhime* are but the Poet's Train;
Low *Poetasters* who can't higher strain:
To the *possess'd of Fancy, Learning, Wit,*
Judgment, Taste, Diction, — prostrate must submit.

Now (*Rhimers* yield, t'his Name their Plea decline)
'Bove wealthy Dulness see *the Poet* shine.

I sing the Man benign Apollo charms,
Competence shields, and bright Idea warms.
No Care the Night, no Sorrow thwarts the Day,
His blissful Years roll unperceiv'd away. —

How diff'rent Midas, but by Knaves carest,
Fortune's lac'd Fool thro' undeserv'd Bequest!
Dull Self to shun, to Drums, Routs, Rackets flies,
Prompt to blame Sense, and Folly patronize.
Praise Him while Silent; wou'd the Stammrer speak?
Hear sputt'ring Gibb'rish in gros Eddies break.

The Poet never to Himself a Load,
Deals Bliss to all, whene'er he steers abroad.

No Turns affected in his Words appear,
All ſimply neat, and elegantly clear.
His ſprightly Converſe, fraught with Eaſe and Grace,
Makes Mirth attendant bask on ev'ry Face:
In each glad Ear his Elocution rings,
Smiles, Joy, and Pleaſure clap their ſilver Wings.
Obſerve Them walking in the vernant Fields,
When Leaves the Grove, and Bloſſoms *Flora* yields.
Unhallow'd MIDAS' hazy Eye can ſee
But Dales, and Plains, a Mountain, and a Tree;
A Sky above, the ſolid Earth below,
And Streams that to the Sea meandring flow.
Th' aſpiring Bard emancipates his Soul,
And more than Man He views from Pole to Pole,
Joyful He wanders thro' th' ethereal Dome,
And kindred Glories of his certain Home.
Of Nature's Book th' inviting Page He reads,
Explores her Works, and all productive Seeds:

If He from Matter to the Godhead rise?
How of chain'd Entity the Links surprize!

Now charm'd with Fancies of *Poetic* Minds,
For each Effect a fav'rite Cause He finds.

When to the Breeze the waving Forests move,
Thus they express their Sorrow, thus their Love.

If watry Murmurs draw th' attentive Ear,
Beings reveal'd ye wondring Mortals hear!
Beneath the hoarse rough Lake, the gurgling Springs,
A slighted Nymph her plaintive Ditty sings.

O'er op'ning Roses when fond *Zephyr* sports,
In sweet-breath Kisses the gay Wanton courts.

Lo --- near a Fountain indolently laid
From her cool Grot he wooes the hidden Maid:
Th' emerging *Naïad* summon'd from above
Accepts his Vows, warm Earnest of his Love.

No more thro' Nature's various Paths they stray;
Each homeward tends, as lures th' inviting Way.

MIDAS no Joy in free Retirement knows,
Save what from Vice's dreggy Fountain flows.
Silence chaſte Muſe — there rot foul Error's Slave,
And by repeated Crimes provoke an early Grave.

Here view *the Poet*. — What gay Thought inſpires!
What Lecture Charms! What inſtant Sally fires!
Theſe are his *Pleaſures*, (not to be defin'd,
Sketch 'em we may) congenial Friends to find
Conform'd to each Inclining of his Mind.

Curious to roam, if t' either Pole he'd ſtray;
To the Sun's riſing, or his ſetting Ray?
Recording Sages ope their annall'd Stores,
And mimic Charts depict what He explores.
He viſits all that Heirs to Fame appear,
From Infant Time to this his eldeſt Year. —

Hark — TULLY, or DEMOSTHENES debates;
'Twas Ye alone cou'd prop two falling States:

In fam'd Harangues triumphant Ye diſplay,
How Man imperial Eloquence can ſway.

PLATO attends his Paſſions to controul,
Refine his Morals, and elate his Soul.
By ſuch a Pen how much does VIRTUE gain!
His Style divine *Homerically* plain,
Shews when by Death we're freed from mortal Strife,
The Soul's unpinion'd, ever glorious Life.

The jealous Siſters wake ſuperior Charms,
Courting *the Poet* with expanded Arms:
" Why thus unmindful of our Raptures grown?
" Quit thoſe dull Studies, cultivate your own."

As from APOLLO, he the Check reverſes,
Solliciting his Smile each *Muſe* appears.

Thinks He of Mirth, or Lover's fond Surprize,
A raviſh'd Kiſs, or Jealouſy's Surmiſe?

CATULLUS

CATULLUS, PROPERCE, and TIBULLUS call;
OVID inſiſts the Lot on Him ſhou'd fall:
Joyous ANACREON challenges them all.

*Sicilian* Bards with rural Pipe diſplay
Their Shepherds artleſs Love in humble Lay.

Good-natur'd *Satyr*, Friend to Taſte and Rule,
Scourges the Knave, and arrogating Fool.

The *Comics* half unmask their ſly Pretence,
And gaily ſerious leer him into Senſe.

The *Tragic* Muſe in fatal Pomp appears,
With Terror ſtrikes; or melts him into Tears:
That Hand a Poniard, This fell Poiſon bears.

Lo --- PINDAR, HORACE, raging bear away,
In Lightnings rob'd with miſſive Thunders play!

If Loves dire Effects, hence deſtructive Wars,
Expiring Heroes, and triumphal Cars,
Poſſeſs his raviſh'd Breaſt --- the *Epic* Muſe
Bids her *Mæonian*, or the *Mantuan* chuſe.

On

On his warm Mind the Splendor of their Lines
As from a Glaſs by ſtrong Reflection ſhines.
The martial Strains embattle to his View
The raging Warriors; ſtreams the crimſon Dew.
Here *Greeks* purſue, *Troy*'s Champions rally there,
Fierce in the Page, as in the Field they were.

The Lines relenting plaintively excel,
Where *Dido*'s Sighs the ſlow-pac'd Numbers ſwell:
Her ill-ſtarr'd Paſſion ſaddens ev'ry Thought,
By the fond Poet to Perfection wrought.

Now, tow'rd the Palace-Gate *Evander* ſpies
In lengthen'd Stream a waving Glare ariſe,
Doubts, hopes, and fears --- lov'd *Pallas*' Bier deſcries.
Th' attendant Troops a mute Dejection ſhow;
Vain Words but Parody conſummate Woe.
Stript of his Pomp, droops *Æthon* * as he goes,
In big round Tears his ſilent Anguiſh flows.

* Pallas' *War-horſe.*

The

The frantic Father rails at ev'ry Star,
And weeps his Son's too early Thirſt of War.

Trembles high Heav'n as Gods with Gods engage;
In fiery Whirls conflictive Thunders rage:
With Shouts, with Groans th' enſanguin'd Plains reſound,
Crowds fall on Crowds; fell Havoc ſtorms around.

Dire Scene of Woe, Victorious over Years,
So ſtrongly painted, it now freſh appears.
Hear *Ilion*'s Groans aſſail th' unpitying Skies!
See Flames devouring from th' *Æneïd* riſe!
Admiring Worlds the blazing Lines rehearſe,
*Troy* burns for ever in great MARO's Verſe!

Nor leſs have *Moderns* felt APOLLO's Laws,
Nor leſs deſerve true *Critics*' loud Applauſe;
With kindred Fire they lineally excel.
*Italy* TASSO boaſts, and *France* CORNEILLE.
*Portugal* CAMOUENS; ſprightly LOPEZ *Spain*.
To tell their Numbers in each Walk were vain.

Hail *Britain* laſt, but not the leaſt in Fame,
Thine to the Lawrel ſtands the foremoſt Claim.
Enamour'd *Nature* glad to be purſu'd,
Diſmiſs'd her Handmaid *Art*, when SHAKESPEAR woo'd;
To *Greece*, to *Rome*, ſhe coily dealt her Charms,
But ev'ry Beauty yields to his lov'd Arms.
MILTON diſpleas'd at his unequal Birth,
Scorns to be fetter'd to our humble Earth;
Reſolves a Flight unknown to human Race,
Soars o'er the Limits of confining *Space*:
*Is*, *ere Time was*, at the creative Nod,
And *paints* the Draught of a *Deſigning* GOD!
*Rhimers*, and *Midas*, never ſhall Ye know,
What heav'nly Bliſs ideal Tranſports ſhow.
Fir'd with a Theme, the raptur'd *Poet* turns
T' expreſſive Attitudes; in Thought he burns.
Inciting Muſes the wiſh'd Numbers bring,
Inſpire the ſacred Verſe, and urge to ſing.

His Fame *Minerva* anxious to protect,
Points what to chuſe, and marks what to reject.

Thus ere ſhe ſpoke in *Cumæ*'s dread Abode,
The SYBIL labour'd with the *Delphic* God.

Lives there a Wretch ſo grov'ling to compare,
The ſterling Dulneſs of an untaught Heir,
To the learn'd *He* that juſtly wears the Bays,
His ſtudious Hours, and his harmonious Lays?

Bow ye dull Vain who large Poſſeſſions boaſt,
Let Kings revere who ſtamps their Glory moſt;
The Nation honour, from whom Fame ſhe draws;
Virtue he crowns, gives Sanctity to Laws,
Oppreſſion's Terror in lov'd Freedom's Cauſe.

Hence DUNCES learn how infinite the Odds;
*Yours* is a *Mortal:* HIS a Life of GODS!

11 7 '49

*FINIS.*